

ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES BUREAU OF STANDARDS



NATIONAL QUALITY AWARDS PROGRAMME



**ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES BUREAU OF STANDARDS (SVGBS)
NATIONAL QUALITY AWARDS (NQA) PROGRAMME**

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1.0 OVERVIEW OF NATIONAL QUALITY AWARDS PROGRAMME

Quality (sometimes referred to as business quality) can be defined as “the ability of a product or service to meet customer needs” (Heizer and Render, 2014). It can also be noted that several studies have shown that quality and excellence awards increase commitment on the part of management to assume a sustained organization-wide drive toward higher performance, which would upgrade the competitiveness of their organizations (Bandyopadhyay and Nair, 2015).

This National Quality Awards programme is presented and coordinated by the SVGBS to promote the need for organizational excellence and Total Quality Management among companies in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. This programme entails a framework for the establishment of a NQA with the aim of increasing the efficiency and ensuring continuous effectiveness in business functions and operations.

The programme will also aim to encourage the alignment of strategic directions with economic sustainability and national policies through the promotion of quality. Participating organizations can experience many benefits by complying with the reward criteria for this Awards Programme.

The document should be used to establish associated work plan and other related documentation to inform and guide NQA.

2.0 PURPOSE OF THE NQA

The National Quality Awards would serve as the mechanism used for the promotion of the National Quality Infrastructure (NQI) of SVG. It would seek to demonstrate to policy makers, stakeholders and consumers; the significant role of standards and quality related systems in both the macro and micro economic prospects.

The programme will focus on four specific areas; national competitiveness, organizational excellence, capacity development for quality institution and consumer satisfaction.

The programme provides for the possible boost of competitiveness by increasing an organization’s/business ability to compete by effectively meeting the requirements of the global market and fair-trade practices.

Government would have the opportunity to use it as a means of strategically building on growing export markets through business expansion and improved quality.

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3.0 PROGRAMME AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

3.1 The National Quality Award is expected to set the foundation for continuous organizational improvement as it relates to both Internal and External Customers by promoting and influencing a quality culture. It would also provide support to organizations in their quest to ensure and maintain consumer satisfaction.

3.2 Objectives:

- To assess and benchmark organizations/businesses level of quality implementation
- To promotion of excellence in quality and quality culture throughout the company
- To encouraging organizations/businesses to strive for excellence;
- To recognizing and rewarding companies/organisations for their demonstration of quality within their business operations;
- To creating a national awareness of Standardization, Quality Assurance and Metrology and increases awareness of the economic and social benefits of SQAM.

4.0 LIMITATIONS:

In planning and executing activities of the NQA; it is envisioned that challenges can affect the effective execution of the NQ. These challenges must be recognized and addressed prior to the implementation of the programme. The following are possible limitations:

- Political/Government buy-in; which is necessary for the overall success of the programme
- Finance implications for the SVBGS for the Hosting of Award
- Cost implications for organiations/businesses
- Designed mechanism for continuous hosting of awards
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5.0 FRAMEWORK FOR THE NQA:

The following considerations may be used to develop the National Quality Award:

1. Establishment of a Select Committee to provide administrative support
2. Establishment of a NQA Committee
 - Development of entry, judging and evaluation criteria
 - Selection of Assessors
3. Determination of Duration of the NQA
4. Identification and selection of sectors/areas of focus for the NQA
5. Establishment of dispute resolution mechanism
6. Financing the NQA
7. Marketing and promotion
8. Planning and hosting of Awards Ceremony

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6.0 DEVELOPMENT OF THE NQA



Select Committee-Administration

A SVGBS managed secretariat should function as the Administrative Centre of the NQA. The Secretariat should consist of Officers from the various departments of the SVGBS. The Secretariat shall be responsible for:

1. Drafting of Terms of Reference for the NQA Committee
2. championing the NQA at the national level with policymakers and other government entities;
3. administrative procedures and work instructions for various elements;
4. coordinating all the activities associated with the hosting of the NQA (venue selection, procurement of awards, catering, etc);
5. coordinating the entries;
6. coordinating the judging and selection of the winners;
7. oversight of decisions regarding possible sources of funding for the hosting of the event;
8. coordination of promotional activities;
9. engaging stakeholders-relationship management
10. assisting with financing decisions

The Secretariat should serve as the focal point for any questions, concerns or disputes related to the administration of the Awards Programme and should be abreast of the progress of every element of the Awards, inclusive of the approval and dissemination of official correspondences.

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NQA COMMITTEE

The committee will oversee the management of the NQA. The Committee will be comprised of individuals who can provide guidance on the implementation of the awards, with at least one individual from the SVGBS in the position of Chairperson or committee member.

Constitution of the committee

The Committee will comprise individuals/experts from the public and private sector as well as QI professionals/institutions. Participation is expected to be voluntary and must be communicated to members.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Committee

The committee should be established to maintain transparency and impartiality in the NQA. The committee is expected to perform the following roles with associated responsibilities:

1. selection of a logo to identify the official status of the NQA
2. identification and engagement of stakeholders in discussions about the NQA- identifying the mechanisms for buy-in by the necessary stakeholders, e.g. incentives for participation
3. identification and selection of target sectors/areas/businesses
4. establishment of procedures for entry, evaluation, disputes
5. establishment of marketing and promotion strategies- transparency and impartiality
6. determining the financing mechanisms for sustainability of the awards
7. conducting periodic review and assessment of the NQA programme
8. assisting with the final selection/approval of winners.
9. assisting with the planning and hosting of the Awards Ceremony

Additionally; the NQA Committee should also liaise with the NQA Secretariat to establish incentives for the participation of companies, and ensure those incentives are part of the promotional packages.

Incentives can include where possible:

- *mentorship for winning companies;*
- *free audits of companies*
- *promotion of the companies post awards*
- *opportunities for highlighting winners in future promotions.*
- *Use of SVGBS Standards Mark*

NOTE While it may be worthwhile to have a QI professional who is advanced in quality assessment procedures as part of the committee, this individual should not be eligible to serve as part of the assessment team for the awards, in an effort

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to maintain the integrity of the committee. Persons serving on the committee should not be eligible to enter the awards for the same reasons of integrity and transparency of the Programme and its process.



DURATION OF THE NQA

The duration of the NQA programme shall be biennial (every two years) or as decided by the Management SVGBS/Select Committee and based on availability of resources-both human and financial and consultation with stakeholders.



SECTOR AND STAKEHOLDERS SELECTION

Determination of Stakeholders' interest – NQA committee should communicate with stakeholders both private and public stakeholders to decide on the focus of the award. Consideration should be given to National priorities and sectors with established operational quality system.

Examples of Focus can include the following:

1. specific sectors: Food Manufacturing, Agro-processing

Selection of Categories award types.

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Categories
Criteria



ENTRY CRITERIA

The NQA committee should establish entry criteria. These criteria should be established and conveyed to interested stakeholders. The criteria should consider the categories of prizes under which the entries can be evaluated.

Example: A company that has not utilized and quality system or service shall not be eligible for the award.

Entry/application Criteria form must be completed see- Annex Form

Criteria should also include:

1. size of business
2. business registration information(taxes, licenses)
3. Types of quality system



JUDGING CRITERIA

The judging criteria should be established and communicated to interested stakeholders.

The criteria should be transparent and fair. It should outline what Assessors will be considering for judging.

Example: design NQA Entry packages for interested stakeholders with both entry and judging criteria.

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ASSESSORS

1. Criteria for minimum qualifications and experience should be established for selection of Assessors.
2. Assessors should be selected based on relevant experience for the effective operation of the NQA.
3. The process of selection, training and development of assessors should be as transparent as possible.
4. Training of Assessors should be conducted where possible.
5. Assessors can include officers of the Bureau to allow or the maintenance of a level of transparency and building capacity for sustainability of the process.

The roles of Assessors:

- reviewing submitted company documentation;
- conducting fair assessment of companies during on-site audits; and
- reporting on findings from the assessment/audit.

Example: engagement of other Bureau of Standards or contract external QI experts to function as Assessors.

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EVALUATION

1. All quality awards entries should be evaluated.
2. The process of evaluation should be established and based on the entry criteria established by this awards programme.
3. It should therefore include: steps related to eligibility to the application process as well as the review of requisite forms involved for eligibility and self-assessment (if applicable).



COMPLAINT HANDLING, APPEAL AND DISPUTE SETTLEMENT/RESOLUTION

It should be anticipated that there may be some participants who may not agree with the final evaluation or elements of the evaluation. A dispute committee may be established to address any disputes that arise out of any part of the NQA process.

1. There must be established a mechanism for handling of complaints and appeal process; which should include clear hierarchy of the handling of complaints
2. This information must be made available to applicants.
3. This process should also include a dispute resolution protocols to address dissatisfaction with any element of the evaluation process and the final results of that process or any element thereof.
4. The committee should follow the relevant protocols that ensure transparency and impartiality and clear lines of communication for resolving disputes.
5. This committee should constitute individuals independent of the operational processes of the NQA, to ensure un-bias/fairness.
6. The entire process should be documented, inclusive of the complaint and the means taken to resolve it.

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NATIONAL QUALITY AWARDS FINANCING

To ensure the sustainability of the Quality Awards Programme, the SVGBS should ensure that the necessary financing is secured. Financing should be built into the annual activities of the Bureau with a budget established to estimate costs. Cost should be reviewed and updated to reflect any changes in annual prices.

Financing can make provisions for remuneration of QI professionals who are part of the process and may need to be paid for their services.

Other relevant associated costs include:

- a) Transportation
- b) Launching of NQA
- c) Meals
- d) Documentation
- e) Training
- f) Marketing and Promotion
- g) Hosting of Awards-- e.g Venue, Decorations

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ADVOCACY- MARKETING AND PROMOTION

The NQA is primarily a QI promotion mechanism and should be used as such to educate and market the services of the Bureau by creating a way business can be rewarded for recognition of Quality.

Promotions and advocacy for the NQA is a critical element to provide for possible buy-in from the public/stakeholders. A public awareness/promotional campaign must be designed and tailored to the focus of the NQA. The marketing and promotional campaign should be targeted and focused particularly on the businesses/companies eligible for the awards.

The selection/design of the logo for the programme should be included in the promotional activities by hosting a national logo design competition. All relevant national media, business associations and government should be engaged to ensure that information is widely and effectively disseminated.

The advocacy should outline how the country can benefit from the NQA, and should also be targeted at high level officials in government.

A comprehensive campaign should include all possible channels – newspapers, television and radio, banners, online/social media, email blast and face-to-face events.

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PLANNING AND HOSTING THE NQA CEREMONY

The NQA Secretariat shall be responsible planning activities for the hosting of the National Quality Awards Ceremony

Mechanisms should also be established to address the following:

- ✓ The establishment of a logo that represents the awards- e.g. banner, backdrop, photo booth/wall.
- ✓ Budgeting for - food, venue prizes, decoration, entertainment, programme and other documentation as well as other activities related to the ceremony.
- ✓ Decision on dress code and class of event if necessary
- ✓ Theme, colour scheme and decorating
- ✓ Establishment of registration protocols – e.g., seating, ushering
- ✓ Awareness/Promotions
- ✓ Media coverage of event

NOTE: The select committee should be responsible for the development of an event plan to be approved by the SVGBS.

END OF DOCUMENT